

Message Text

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SUBJECT: KING CONCLUDES SUCCESSFUL VISIT TO CATALONIA

1. THE KING CONTINUED HIS OFFICIAL VISIT TO CATALONIA WITH A WELL-RECEIVED VISIT THURSDAY 19 FEB TO TARRAGONA. SPEAKING TO A FULLY PACKED MAIN PLAZA, THE KING REPEATED HIS MESSAGE THAT UNITED SPAIN WILL ACHIEVE THE FUTURE WHICH ALL DESIRE. THAT SAME EVENING A NATIONALIST ORIENTED RALLY WAS HELD IN BARCELONA TO COUNTERACT THE VARIOUS PROTEST AND STRIKE
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DEMONSTRATIONS WHICH HAD CONTUNED DURING THE FIRST DAYS OF

THE KING'S VISIT. THE SMALL CROWD CARRIED BANNERS WITH SLOGANS AGAINST AMNESTY, COMMUNISM, AND FREEMASONRY AND IN SUPPORT OF VIOLA, THE GOVT APPOINTED MAJOR OF BARCELONA, WHO HAS BECOME A TARGET OF THE OPPOSITION.

2. THE KING PRESIDED AT A CABINET MEETING FEB 20, THE FIRST TO BE HELD IN BARCELONA SINCE JUNE 1970 AMONG THE ITEMS APPROVED IN THE MEETING WERE, AS EXPECTED, A NUMBER DEALING DIRECTLY WITH CATALONIA. A COMMISSION WAS TO BE FORMED TO STUDY THE IMPLEMENTATION OF A SPECIAL ADMINISTRATIVE REGIME FOR THE FOUR CATALONIA PROVINCES OF BARCELONA, GERONA, LERIDA AND TARRAGONA. THE DECENTRALIZATION OF THE ADMINISTRATION OF VARIOUS COMPONENTS OF THE DEPTS OF PUBLIC WORKS, INDUSTRY, EDUCATION, LABOR AND HOUSING WAS ANNOUNCED. A BILL WOULD BE SENT TO THE "CORTES" TO PERMIT THE INSCRIPTION IN BIRTH CERTIFICATES OF NAMES IN ANY OF THE VARIOUS REGIONAL LANGUAGES. CONSENT WAS GRANTED TO TWO CATALAN VILLAGES TO OFFICIALLY USE THE CATALAN FORM OF THEIR NAMES. AND IT WAS ANNOUNCED THAT THE EDUCATION MINISTER HAD BRIEFED THE CABINET ON THE STATE OF INSTRUCTION IN CATALAN (AT THE SAME TIME THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION ISSUED A DECREE OFFICIALLY RECOGNIZING THE "ROYAL ACADEMY OF THE BASQUE LANGUAGE").

3. THE KING IN CABINET HAS ACTED, AS WITH THE RECOGNITION IN DECEMBER OF THE VARIOUS REGIONAL LANGUAGES AS OFFICIALLY NATIONAL LANGUAGES, TO REMOVE THE MANY AND UNNECESSARY IRRITANTS INVOLVED IN THE PRIOR REPRESSION OF THE CATALAN AND OTHERS NATIONAL LANGUAGES. THE CABINET HAS ALSO MOVED TO FULFILL THE KING'S PROMISE TO RECOGNIZE REGIONAL SPECIAL PECULIARITIES. THE KING'S VISIT TO CATALONIA, THEREFORE, WAS IN EFFECT AN EFFORT TO DEAL WITH THE REGIONAL ISSUE THROUGHOUT SPAIN.

4. THE KING CONCLUDED HIS ROUND OF VISITS TO THE FOUR PROVINCIAL CATALAN CAPITALS WITH A VISIT TO GERONA. ON FEB 21 THE KING MADE THE IMPORTANT GESTURE OF VISITING, ACCOMPANIED BY THE SYNDICAL MINISTER AND PREVIOUS CIVIL GOVERNOR OF BARCELONA MARTIN VILLA, ONE OF THE MOST STRIKE TROUBLED WORKERS' NEIGHBORHOODS IN BARCELONA. HE WAS REPORTEDLY WELL RECEIVED.

5. THROUGHOUT HIS VISIT THE ACTIONS OF THE KING HAVE MUCH RESEMBLED THOSE OF A POLITICIAN TRYING TO SELL HIMSELF.
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ACCORDING TO AMCONGEN BARCELONA, HE HAS GREATLY SUCCEEDED IN DOING SO. THE MOST IMPORTANT AND WELL RECEIVED GOVT ACTION WAS THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE COMMISSION TO STUDY REGIONAL ADMINISTRATION. THE KING EARNED PRAISE FOR HIS FLAWLESS CATALAN ACCENT AS WELL AS FOR HIS HABIT OF MENTIONING IN EACH AREA HE VISITED SOME WELL KNOWN LOCAL SON. STABLER

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